for Cotton Research, Nagpur has found, *inter-alia*, that Bt. cotton hybrids generally registered reduction in 2-6 sprays across the States with yield advantage of 2—4 Qtls. per hectare. Information received from the Government of Andhra Pradesh indicated, however, that net returns from Bt. cotton were less compared to non-Bt. cotton in some regions due to higher cost of cultivation, lower yield potential compared to popular indigenous hybrids, short staple length sensitivity to adverse weather conditions etc.

(d) The Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) had accorded conditional approval in April, 2002 for the environmental release of three Bt. cotton hybrids in the State of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu for a period of three years. The widespread prevalence of drought during 2002-03 caused unusually low incidence of bollworms, thereby reducing the advantage of Bt. cotton. An evaluation of the performance of Bt. cotton during Kharif 2002 indicates that by and large the farmers who followed the recommended agronomic practices realized higher profits. The area under Bt. cotton has accordingly increased by about three fold during Kharif 2003.

National Policy on pesticides

1855. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:
SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are thinking of formulating a National Policy on Pesticides in the light of the increasing dangers to human health from food, drinking water etc.;

(b) whether the eminent agriculture scientists Dr. M.S. Swaminathan has also called for a National Policy on pesticides; and

(c) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) There is already a National

Agriculture Policy announced by the Government in July, 2000 which includes the areas of plant protection including pesticides. A well-defined system to regulate manufacture, sale, import, export and use of pesticides in the country already exists in the form of the Insecticides Act, 1968. The Registration Committee constituted under Section 5 of the Insecticides Act registers the pesticides only after satisfying itself about the efficacy and safety to human beings, animals and environment. Government of India has adopted the Integrated Pest Management approach encompassing cultural, mechanical and biological methods and need based use of pesticides as the cardinal principle and main plank of plant protection in the overall crop production programme to minimize the indiscriminate and injudicious use of chemical pesticides.

(b) and (c) The Government is not aware of any call by Dr. M.S. Swaminathan for a National Policy on Pesticides.

MIS proposals of States

1856. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the specific proposals for Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) received from various States during the last five year-wise, State-wise and commodities for which MIS was sought;

(b) the number of schemes approved and quantum of funds released, State-wise and year-wise; and

(c) the results achieved during the said period, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) The requisite information is given in the enclosed Statement-I (*See* below).

(b) The requisite information is given in the enclosed Statement-II (*See* below).

(c) A Statement showing procurement of various commodities, as a result of implementation of Market Intervention Scheme (MIS), State-wise, is given in the enclosed Statement-III.